OCA

consumer register

A supplement to Consumer News

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Speak up & be heard

CONSUMER REGISTER lists summaries of major consumer proposals before Federal agencies. If you wish to submit written comments, include your name & address, state the name & *Federal Register* citation of the proposal on which you are commenting and explain your views briefly & clearly.

Energy

President Nixon has established the **Federal Energy Office** by Executive Order 11748. FEO is part of the **Executive Office of the President.**

The Administrator advises the President on the whole range of national energy matters, including the production, conservation, use, control, distribution & allocation of energy.

Details—*Federal Register:* Dec. 6, page 33575.

Food stamps

Beginning Jan. 1, **Agriculture Dept.** is amending its eligibility standards & coupon allotments for food stamps in the 48 contiguous state & District of Columbia. Hawaii & Alaska will be covered later. This amendment to the Food Stamp Act reflects increases in prices of food.

The value of the coupon allotment for a family of 4 is raised from $116 to $142 a month. In addition, the maximum income a 4-person household can have & still be eligible for food stamps has been increased from $387 to $473 a month. Appropriate adjustments are made for other household sizes & income levels.

Details—*Federal Register:* Nov. 1, page 30118.

Pork

Effective Dec. 17, **Agriculture Dept.** amended its Federal meat inspection regulations to require trichinae treatment for all pork products that appear to be fully cooked but might be eaten rare or without thorough cooking. Until now, only specifically named products that appeared to be cooked were covered by the regulations.

The number of trichinae-infected swine is low, but the possibility of human infection still exists if pork products are eaten raw, undercooked or otherwise untreated for destruction of possible live trichinae. The disease is marked by muscle pain, fever, edema & shortness of breath. This risk is minimized under the amended regulations.

Interested persons may obtained copies of the amendment from the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, Room 1658-S, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250.

Details—*Federal Register:* Nov. 15, page 31516.

Artists' paints

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has confirmed Dec. 3 as the effective date of its order exempting artists' paints from the Federal ban on household paints containing more than 0.5% lead.

The exemption was published in the *Federal Register* in October. Persons who felt they would be adversely affected by the order were given until Nov. 4 to file objections. CPSC received no objections; however, 26 individual artists had earlier sent in comments favoring the exemption.

Details—*Federal Register:* Nov. 15, page 31519; Oct. 4, page 27514; Jan. 4, page 799. CONSUMER REGISTER: Nov. 15; Feb. 1.

Cribs

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued a final regulation requiring that baby cribs must meet new safety standards. The regulation becomes effective Feb. 1 & affects all full-size cribs shipped in interstate commerce.

Designed to protect babies from strangulation, suffocation & falls, the new standards include these requirements:

- Slats must be no greater than 2⅜ inches apart (so an infant's head will not become wedged between the slats).
- Cribs must conform to standard sizes & must have snug-fitting mattresses (so an infant cannot be caught between the crib side & a mattress that is too small for the crib).
- Railing height must measure 26 inches from top of railing to lowest level of mattress support (so a baby cannot fall out of crib).
- Cribs must have safe & sturdy hardware & smooth wood surfaces & must carry clear assembly instructions & warning labels concerning safe mattress size.

The standards incorporate certain changes suggested by crib manufacturers, trade associations, consumers & consumer organizations.

CPSC has proposed that all new cribs conforming to these standards should carry labels notifying consumers of this fact. Consumers owning or purchasing old cribs may contact CPSC for information on how to make old cribs safer. Write to Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207, or call free of charge: 800-638-2666 (Maryland residents call 800-492-2937).

CPSC is now preparing separate safety standards for portable & undersized cribs.

Details—*Federal Register:* Nov. 21, page 32129; Dec. 4,

page 33405; April 13, page 9312. CONSUMER NEWS, March 15.

Also noteworthy

FOOD LABELING—**Food & Drug Administration** proposes specific size & style of type to appear on labels of nonstandardized food having common or usual names (such as seafood cocktail & various diluted orange juice beverages). The proposed amendment is to stop a manufacturer from emphasizing a particular term or word by using larger or different type. FDA says such emphasis could be misleading to consumers. Comment due by Jan. 9. *FR:* Dec. 10, p. 33984.

TIRES—**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** proposes minimum traction requirements for new passenger car tires. Comments due by Jan. 18. *FR:* Nov. 19, p. 31841.

FABRIC FLAMMABILITY—**Consumer Product Safety Commission** issues statement clarifying the flammability standard for textiles used in clothing. *FR:* Nov. 14, p. 31289.

BRAKE HOSES—**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** amends motor vehicle safety standards for hydraulic brake hoses. *FR:* Nov. 13, p. 31302.

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